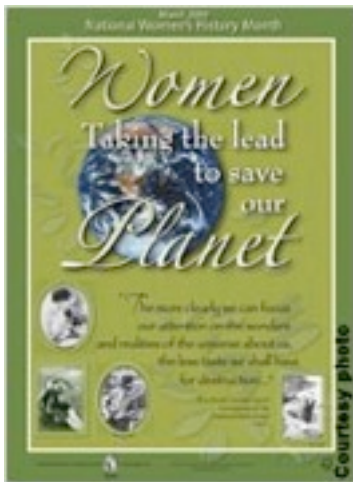


ACCESS AMERICA

U.S. Celebrates Women's Contributions to the World Every March

Women's role in the environmental or "green" movement is 2009 focus



Logo for the Women's History Month 2009 theme, Women Taking the Lead to Save our Planet.

The world-renowned marine biologist, author and environmentalist Rachel Carson is the inspiration for the 2009 National Women's History

Month theme, Women Taking the Lead to Save Our Planet.

Carson's 1962 book *Silent Spring* focused the world's attention on the harm to human health and the environment caused by the indiscriminate use of pesticides. Its message was that mankind's growing reliance on these chemicals carried real and not fully understood risks. Carson and her book are credited with launching the modern environmental movement.

Every March in the United States, National Women's History Month celebrates the contributions of women to the nation's history and culture. This year's theme "honors women who have taken the lead in the

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environmental or 'green' movement," according to the National Women's History Project (NWHF), an educational nonprofit group based in California. Rachel Carson is "the iconic model" for the theme.

UNITED STATES ALSO CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Each year, the president issues a proclamation calling on all citizens to observe March as National Women's History Month, as well as a separate proclamation on International Women's Day, March 8. The

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From the Editor

Greetings to alumni and Access America readers. My name is Christiaan James and I am the new Cultural Affairs Officer at US Embassy Tunis, as well as the Editor of this newsletter. This is my first experience in Tunisia; however, I have travelled a lot in this region and am excited to be here again. My connection with the Middle East and North Africa goes back to my high school years, when, as a sixteen-year-old student, I backpacked through Egypt and became fascinated by the people, language, and culture of the region. Later, I decided to study Arabic and Middle East Studies at Harvard. And, as a Fulbright researcher in Yemen, I had such a wonderful experience that I decided I had to return to the Middle East to work. So, as an alum of the Fulbright program and the Cultural Affairs Officer, I look forward to meeting you and discussing your experiences and plans for the future. Please feel free to contact me at jamesck@state.gov .



—Christiaan K. James

From the IRC

Books

A to Z of American Women Leaders and Activists
Hightower-Langston, Donna.

Understanding the Gender Gap: an economic history of American women
Goldin, Claudia Dale.

Black and White Women of the Old South
Minrose C. Gwin.

Votes without Leverage
Harvey, Anna L

Cowgirls : Women of the American West
Teresa Jordan.

Les Américaines: histoire des femmes aux Etats-Unis
Sara M. Evans.

Online resources

The National Women's History Project (NWHHP)
www.nwhp.org

Women's History Month
<http://womenshistorymonth.gov>

— Khaled Ben Bhoudid
& the IRC team.



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worldwide celebration, begun in 1975 by the United Nations, recognizes women's achievements, highlights issues of common concern and focuses on ending discrimination and increasing support for women's full and equal participation in society. In 2009, the theme is Women and Men United to End Violence Against Women and Girls.

For National Women's History Month this year, NWHHP asked for names of women who have shown "exceptional vision and leadership" in protecting the environment at the local, state, national and international levels. Rather than selecting only a few people from the 103 nominees, the group is recognizing all of them.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH HONOREES HELPED OUT MOTHER NATURE

The Women's History Month honorees include scientists, engineers, politicians, writers and filmmakers, conservationists, teachers, community organizers, religious or workplace leaders, businesswomen and others who took action to help heal the planet — some by promoting legislation and education, and others by getting their hands dirty planting trees and picking up trash.

Some are historic figures, such as Ellen Swallow Richards (1842–1911), the first American woman to earn a degree in chemistry and the first person to undertake scientific water-quality studies in the United States, and Mollie Beattie (1947–1996), the first woman to head the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the Endangered Species Act.

Most of the honorees are contemporary women, such as these:

- Lynne Cherry, author of *The Great Kapok Tree* and more than 30 other children's books that teach respect for the earth;

- Sharon Matola, an American who founded the Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center, begun in 1983 to protect exotic animals that had been used in a documentary film but were too tame to be released into the wild;

- Meg Lowman, a Florida biologist, science educator and pioneer in temperate and tropical forest canopy ecology, who runs a foundation for tropical forest conservation;

- Sally Ride, the first American woman in space, now a promoter of youth education in science and technology, especially on climate change;

- Lorrie Otto, of Wisconsin, a founder of the natural landscaping movement, which promotes biodiversity through the preservation and restoration of native plant communities;

- Alice Waters, chef and owner of Chez Panisse restaurant in California and head of a foundation that promotes healthy school lunches and educational programs such as sustainable school gardens; and

- Betsy Damon, founder of Keepers of the Waters, headquartered in Oregon, which supports communities in the preservation and restoration of their water sources. She works in the United States and China.

This article is adapted from an article on America.gov, a web site delivering information about current U.S. foreign policy and about American life and culture produced by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Ikram HILI

MEPI Student Leader Program

Home in Tunisia: Sfax, Kerkennah

Home in the U.S.: Seattle WA; Bozeman MT; Washington, D.C; New York City

Fondest Memory of the U.S.:

I have great memories from my visit to the Montana Boys and Girls Club where I met many children, from different families and backgrounds. I was really touched when I came to realise how these children were interested in learning about my country. I also loved my visit to the Blackfeet Indian Reservation where I spent a night in a tepee.

My experience:

My whole experience in the US was memorable. It's not just a six-week experience, but a life-lasting one. We spent my first week in Washington DC, and we were lucky to be there during the 4th of July celebrations. Then we moved to Montana State University Campus where I spent the most wonderful days, not only of my stay in the US, but of my life so far.



Photo courtesy of Ikram Hili

We had classes in the morning and several different activities in the afternoon. We went climbing, biking, hiking, and horse-back riding which was an Amazing adventure with a capital



Photo courtesy of Ikram Hili

A. We had a big stroll in the wilderness of the west, riding uphill and downhill, crossing rivers, wading through mud, being patient with the horse when they stopped to eat or drink. We were also invited to some families for ice-cream and home-made pizza parties. I was impressed by their generosity and hospitality.

We also had the chance to meet with some community service and NGO activists who told us about their ongoing projects and future plans. One of them was a lady who was collaborating with the City Council and the State to help a poor neighbourhood in Bozeman. Another woman took us on a visit to her small charitable organisation. She had a second-hand store and all the money goes to charity. We appreciated the idea and bought some items from there to participate in raising money. We participated in a radio show and a National TV show where we were asked to talk about our different countries. We also talked about our educational system in our respective countries. In a word, my time in the US, as part of MEPI Program, was extraordinary. I would write books and never get done recounting my experience there.

Lessons Learned:

MEPI has changed my perspectives towards life and people. I have learned to be more tolerant towards others and to accept their differences. I have learned how to listen to others' views, and to be respectful and thus

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respected. From my community service experience in the US, I have learned that although I cannot do everything; still, I can do something in order to make a difference in my community. I now know that nothing is impossible if I believe in what I am doing and then do it right.

Advice for others:

Make the most of your experience, and try to make lots of acquaintances because people

there are so friendly, hospitable and generous. Be open to others' viewpoints and never hesitate to voice yours, and you'll see how rewarding this is going to be. As the saying goes, "Opportunity seldom knocks twice, so make it memorable!"

What I miss most about the U.S.:

EVERYTHING! The beauty of Montana, Yellowstone, Blackfeet Reservation and Glacier Park. The hustle and bustle of NYC. The classes we took in Seattle. Also my friends and the family-like atmosphere that made our experience so unique.

Program Announcement

International Fulbright Science and Technology Award

For outstanding Tunisian university students and future leaders to study for a Ph.D. in science, technology, or engineering at top US institutions. The Award is designed to be the most prestigious international scholarship in science and technology

To be eligible you must:

Have completed a Bachelor's degree on or before August 1, 2010.

Deadline: May 15, 2009

For further information please call us at 71-107-438 or send us an email to Tunis_Exchange@state.gov and visit <http://foreign.fulbrightonline.org>

Calendar

Free English Conversation

Every Tuesday & Thursday

American Corner at AMIDEAST
4:00 PM

Weekly discussions on topics from films and music to religion. Topics are posted weekly in the American Corner and at AMIDEAST.

Open Access

Every Monday-Friday

American Corner at AMIDEAST
10:00 AM-6:00 PM

Peruse books and magazines in English on topics from history to pop culture and more.

Weekly Movies:

Fridays 4:00 PM at American Corner

American Corner at AMIDEAST
22, Rue Al Amine al Abassi, Cite des Jardins, 1002 Tunis-Belvedere, tel. 71-790-563 ext. 106

Study in the USA Consultations

Tuesday to Friday

AMIDEAST Advising Resource Library
8:30 AM-3:30 PM

Browse materials from U.S. universities ;consult resources on applications and scholarships.

Study in the USA General Advising*

Every Wednesday & Friday

AMIDEAST Advising Resource Library
12:30 PM

Statement of Purpose Workshops*

By appointment

Graduate Statement of Purpose workshop
Undergraduate Statement of Purpose workshop

**Please call or send an email to make an appointment **



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